



Energy and Environmental Affairs

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CHARLIE BAKER
GOVERNOR

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Governor Baker Declares June as "Great Outdoors Month"

BOSTON – Today Governor Charlie Baker announced June as "Great Outdoors Month" in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with an official proclamation to recognize the month. Governor Baker's proclamation also commemorates the 200th anniversary of Henry David Thoreau's birth, who brought conservation efforts to the forefront with his book *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*.

"With over 450,000 acres of state parks, forests, reservations, beaches, and other facilities across the Commonwealth, the state parks system provides unique opportunities for children and their families to get outside and enjoy outdoor recreation," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "Now that summer is nearly upon us, I hope that everyone takes advantage of Massachusetts' natural resources during 'Great Outdoors Month' and beyond."

"The month of June serves as an excellent opportunity for people to get outside with friends and family to explore the Commonwealth's natural beauty," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. "From rail trails to waterfronts, the state parks system offers plenty of activities to celebrate 'Great Outdoors Month'."

Additionally, Governor Baker's proclamation highlights the bicentennial birthday of writer and philosopher Henry David Thoreau, who was born on July 12, 1817. Thoreau, who is often credited for galvanizing the American Conservation Movement, wrote his book about Walden Pond while "living deliberately" in a cabin in the woods for two years, two months, and two days.

"Henry David Thoreau's importance on not only Massachusetts' land conservation efforts, but also globally, cannot be overstated," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. "*Walden; or Life in the Woods* serves as an important piece of American Literature that has inspired millions, and I am proud that Massachusetts continues to prioritize our state's natural, cultural, and historic resources for generations to come."

Next month, to honor Henry David Thoreau, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will begin hosting several programs highlighting his life and times. For more information please visit the agency's Programs & Events [webpage](#).

"Declaring June as 'Great Outdoors Month' is an excellent way to start the summer recreational season," **said DCR Commissioner Leo Roy**. "The Baker-Polito Administration is dedicated to providing a high level of access to the state parks system, and offering quality programming for visitors to enjoy and appreciate our Commonwealth's unique public treasures."

Contained within the Massachusetts state parks system are exceptional natural landscapes such as mountain ranges, sandy waterfronts, reservoirs, universal access recreation trails, and urban green spaces. Furthermore, the DCR maintains over 250 state parks, which include 87 ocean and inland beaches, 16 1/2 islands, 37 swimming pools, 29 campgrounds, over 4,500 miles of greenways and trails, and 145 miles of paved biking trails, all of which are available to the public.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Leo Roy, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

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